# An Essay on
# The Language of Disease;
Respectfully submitted
to the Faculty of the
Homoeopathic Medical College
of Pennsylvania;
on the
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By
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We need not ask Hygeia for language or song that shall please the eye, cheer the heart, exite correspondent feelings on all around, or cause an echo to be even felt by each observant person; this is nature's melody; her Heavenly boon to bounding hearts, that is spontaneously cought with joy, and reflects its pure image to Him, the Gracious Giver and Center of all our Benefits.

Thus is Hygeia chanted from nature, poetry, and even Physician.

A Heman can sing the language of Flowers: a Gould will ask her to "Let the Flowers talk to themselves their stepping awhile on. "If they will; and listen to the language of Gems,"

But who, or where has the bold

Philanthropic spirit, drawn out and portrayed in lovely colors, the language of disease, so as to elicit the sympathies of pure, noble minds, and engage talent and application in its behalf, far above the sinister motives of gain. If we allow with a Gould, that each Gem speaks to the understanding heart, a language, at once of mirth, or sadness; its sparkle for the Bride, or somber hue for the Mourner: and the Flowers - acknowledg'd emblems of constancy or change, of purity or disgrace: and how readily we all understand the Bridal, or Funereal chaplet.

Shall we then be less ignorant of their nobler language, their Medicinal Song? What will answer nature's call

for Belladonna, but the Deadly Nightshade? or the tumultuous confusion of the heart, that we find revealed in the provings of Pink-Root, but Spigelia? where is there so great a Mountebank, that cannot readily understand the difference in the language calling for Hyoscyamous, from Pulsatilla? and thus in the whole history of disease, compared with, and calling for appropriate parts of our Materia Medica.

Says the worthy Hufeland.

"The voice in which she utters her sufferings and demands relief, consists in the perceptible phenomena of the morbid actions, generally called symp-toms or signs. They are a vocabulary, in which each word has its definite and original

meaning. Then what is more worthy of the pen, and pure heart, than to gather an unfading laurel with which to bedeck the brow, from the outpourings of generous hearts, that have experienced soothing, healing administrations.

One lovely evening in September, while all nature was lavish of her gifts to man, in a bounteous reward for the toils of the Husbandman, and the Queen of night sat on her meridian throne without a rival; the stillness, and loveliness of the scene was changed to one more beautiful by the light footfall and merry laugh of two happy couple, holding communion with nature, and enjoying her gifts with a zest, known and felt only in youth.

I joined the happy circle, but left them with this regret, that their bound-ing hearts might soon be compelled to utter a language in contrast with this, as wide as the cavern that seperates the spirit land of the blest, from that of the lost: nor were my fears groundless. The meridion had not as yet welcomed the King of day to his highest seat, ere I was called to listen to a language most touching and pathetic. The stillness of the room was interrupted by a hurried husky breathing, then a restless movement, a deep groan, and all was quiet for the next moment.

I immediately recognised the gayest of the last evenings party: but how

changed: now, the bounding heart and heaving chest spoke not of joy, nor the sunken eye, and furrowed brow of happiness. I asked not the cause of this change; but reading from the countenance flushed and bloated, eye, dull and turbid, with an occasional wild expression then a wandering look with dilated pupils, visible pulsation in the carotids, short, quick and irreg-ular respiration; pulse quick and resisting; offensive breath; brown urine and small quantity, cold extremeties with hot head and slight distortion of muscles: frightful illusions with constant moaning. My immediate interpretation of this language, was a call for Belladonna which was hailed as an old acquaintance

by the disease, and my mind followed it as a phantom through the air, cautiously securing the ingress so as to prevent its entrance, even should the invader return, and prowl around the castle it had so strongly portefied

If there is an occupation aside from Divinity that claim's the entire thoughts and reflections of him who follows the same, where shall we look for it if not in the profession of Medicine?

It is here, in hours of retirement and reflection we mature our plans, here, the weapons are chosen and manner of attack decided upon; here, the results of the conflict are weighed, and here also the purest light by which we can read the disease in its own languag

We in some quiet little "Sanctum" may often hear an echo that shall guide us unerringly, that would not be noticed directly around the sick couch. This fact was presented to me so prominently a few months since, I shall here relate the same without further apology.

Since the last echo of the shout of the Indian has died from the beautiful banks of the Susquehanna, since the blood-stained turf of American Eden "Wyoming" has been washed out except in memory; since Gertrude's King so fondly cherished for Waldegrave's sake, or Gertrude's virtues live only in song; yet there is this day at least one heart as pure and uncontaminated as was the heroine

of wild Wyoming's scene, and one lover as true at heart as was Waldegrave.

This pure heart is in the frail tenement of Miss Jane — now living with a friend in a quiet retreat that from the north overlooks Philadelphia, this modern Greece; and often from thence have I traced the outlines of our noble Institution with grateful feelings for the untiring and self-sacrificing labours of its Professors and the principles they have there so boldly taught: and it was at this retreat that I learned the untimely death of our worthy Brother, the noble observing, faithful Professor of Materia Medica, Dr. Matthews. how often when fatigued by labor, and exhausted by talking, from

the enfeebled state of his Lungs: has he still claimed the last minute of his hour, sacrificing his life for the good of his class: Peace to his ashes! May he reap a full reward for his labours where all is "similia".

But to return from my digression. On answering to a country-boys summons, most unexpectedly was I ushered into a mansion of wealth, to a Ladies Boudoir, where every article gave signs of refinement and delicacy. I however soon recognised the invalid as one I had occasionly met in a hovel as it were, administering to the wants of an aged widow Lady: our services were remunerated only by the rich reward of doing good; therefore we became somewhat acquainted, and subsequ

to this, after disease had undermined her constitution as by a concealed foe, and the icy hand of death seemed held out ready for its unrelenting grasp, notwithstanding the most careful attentions were paid by the family Physician. She now pursuaded her capricious host to send for a student friend as she called me. If ever a young Homoeopathic Physician was perplexed to administer a remedy with any confidence of success, I then was that Physician. I had never seen in theory or found in practice any thing that could lead to a decision. I retired to a little sanctum where I might translate the broken fragments of the picture I had left. I found a cold, disfigured face

with an expression of deep thought, that might call for Veratrum: a shortness of breath when sleeping, with stitches through the chest on coughing or taking a deep breath, with an occasional palpitation at the heart, always accompanied by a peculiar expression of anguish, to call for Aconite: I then found great sleeplessness from anguish, even with drowsiness: sleep, moaning, starting with anxious dreams to be most peculiar for Belladonna: while Ignatia alone would respond to a peculiar Epileptic fit that always accompanied by a look and even action of deep chagrin, which I now noticed more, as my mind was called to it by a look and expression I remembered

around the couch of the sick widow, while Pulsatilla was acknowledged by her perfect femenine appearance, gentle good nature: even the eye, the hair was a counterpart of Pulsatilla, which was rendered more perfect by her uterine irregularities, viz. a constant change in every form, yet its leading features seemed thick and dark at every Menstrual period. In fine, here was a perfect wreck without one leading symptom which was free from sympathy. Yet in my little retreat I was confident there could be a translation of this language and a perfect harmony of all its parts. I indulged myself in turning the leaves of a ponderous Album. My mind was arrested

by lines in purity of thought and constancy of affection dedicated to "Alfred" bearing date of Wyoming 48. on another page were expressions of love mingled with chagrin. dedicated to "Susquehanna Baby" again I found Jane pleading for the same relief as her distant relative Gertrude experienced rather than thus suffer-. Instantly "disapointment" harmonized every jargon in the picture before me: and empirically Ignatia was suggested to my mind. I took a review of my minutes: after casting out what appeared mostly sympathetic and Medicinal I found the remaining symptoms a very good picture for Ignatia which I administered each morning and interspersed Saccharum Lactis.

through the day to allay the scruples of my Allopathic host. At my next call the Lady Hostess met me with a little more respect, she even asked me how long since Hahnemann's theory was published: if he was a man of science, conscientious &c. and finally said "her niece was no worse; had one hour refreshing sleep: that she had not a return of those fits as usual, which before had been on an increase.
I was happy to find the kind Hostess a vigilant nurse and a correct observer of symptoms with their changes, altho still hostile to Homoeopathy.
She even persisted that it was useless to administer the regular round of medicine I had left, saying it was no

medicine or at least did no good.
This she must have observed by looking
for its effect, as she knew nothing of
our system of practice. Finding her
so intelligent I gave her my reasons
for leaving blank powders, which
were acknowledged and of course those
powders were lain aside.
Thus ten days passed and a steady
improvement on the part of my patient
without a change of medicine; which
was as much consolation to me. as to
my rival, whose ignorance as to the
real cause of Janes improvement was
manifest by a fresh ordered package
of drugs after each days visit; which
by this time became a source of Amusemen
to the young lady; her Merry Host and myself

The period of Menstruation having now arrived, we were not disapointed in finding a general aggravation of her former symptoms in language too plain for any to misinterpret for Pulsatilla, which I now substituted for the Ignatia. From this period, each visit gave some additional proof of the efficacy of Homoeopathy to the family as well as myself; while we also felt more confidence in each-other Thus one evening, refering to the Album that gave me a revelation of her symp-toms, I asked the pleasure of assisting her in replacing her affections where they would be met and appreciated when I learned this history.

"Alfred and herself were brought up

on adjoining plantations. From their infancy, in their childish sports and youthful excursions, they were never happy if separated. At twenty their vows were plighted, when alas! Alfred fell victim to disease. The storehouse of drugs was examined, and its choicest compound prepared: his wreck was saved, but ah! for Jane: He, emaciated, weak in body and mind, fancied that she was pleased with the accomplishments of his own faithful Physician.

Thus jealousy drove him to despair and brought on a relapse, from which he so far recovered last spring, as to be able to journey to Vermont, and there to experience the bracing, healing breezes from the Green Mountains.

On learning these facts, with many particulars attending him in his sickness viz. insensibility and dulness of feeling, seemed to forget everyone, derangement, recollection gone especially at night; at times complained that Jane had poisoned him; then the most horrid anguish, accompanied with indomitable rage, then sinks to a lethergy again. Obtaining her permission, I wrote him, enclosing Hyoscyamus, giving him a careful history of Jane's sufferings, her constant love and happy cure; urging him to try my prescription and give me a picture of his disease.

He replied "he had no confidence in Homoeopathy, yet he believed the intelligence I had communicated, together with

mountain excursions, had completely restored him; which I also infered by intelligence from the Mansion.
Last Christmas was to have been spent with the restored object of his affection in their native valey; but a mysterious Providence ordered it otherwise.
While engaged in pursuing a deer; in passing a spur of mountain, he lost his direction, was bewildered, and night, with rain and mountain sleet, so completely chilled and paralysed him that he was found the next day prostrated and in perfect mental alienation.
Then followed one of those fearful, protracted Vermont Typhus Fevers; which was succeeded by a cough, and now he lies in Middlebury on the verge of

New England's fatal charm. Tubercula Pulmonu
He now asks me to fly to his relief;
to locate in that beautiful valey so
much like his own Susquehanna!

Gentlemen! If you will
accept of this effort; and on finding
me worthy of the trust, acquit me
with the honors of this Institution
I will haste to unfurl the banner
of Homoeopathy; to restore Alfred to the
worthy object of his affections; to the
fireside of the poor, or mansion of the
rich; to stand on the uncontaminated
platform of Hahnemann's and help
you roll forward this mighty car
of reform, till every town shall
be supplied with the thorough
administrations of pure Homoeopathy